

WASHINGTON LETTER.

From our Regular Correspondent.

WASHINGTON, December 5. Congress is again in session, and the eyes of the country turn naturally toward Washington to see the effect of the assembling of the men who have been selected to make the nation's laws. The meeting in neither House nor Senate differed materially from the usual opening of a second session; the interior of both House and Senate chambers are as bright and inviting to look at as paint, varnish, and new carpets can make them. Much brighter in fact than the looks of some of the Senators and members who are to end their official life with the present Congress. Vice-President Morton and Speaker Crisp were in their respective places at high noon today, and there was no delay in declaring the Senate and the House open for business.

What business will be transacted? is the conundrum that nobody is in a position to solve just at this time, although the impression seems to be general that some legislation concerning silver and immigration, which will not be sufficiently objectionable to President Harrison to meet with a veto, is among the probabilities of the session. There are a number of important bills on the calendar of both House and Senate, having been passed by one or the other body, that an attempt will be made to put through. Among these are the House bill providing for the admission of Arizona and New Mexico. At least two Republican Senators have expressed themselves as being in favor of taking up and passing those bills; one, because he thought there was no good reason for keeping them out, and the other, because he thought they would both send Democratic Senators, which would make the Democratic control of the next Senate a certainty, which he is anxious to bring about, and which the Democrats have not the slightest objection to.

An attempt is likely to be made to change the date for the meeting of Congress from December to early spring, and although it is championed by Republicans who are anxious to precipitate the fight they predict and expect in the Democratic party when the Fifty-third Congress comes together, by making certain that it shall come together in the spring without the necessity of a Presidential proclamation convening an extra session, it meets the unqualified approval of many Democrats, particularly among those who regard an extra session of the next Congress as a necessity, and a majority of the Democrats in the present Congress unquestionably do. Aside from any question of politics, it would certainly be an improvement to have the Congress elected in November meet in the following spring, instead of waffling thirteen months, as it does now, except when called in extra session.

The Senate to-day took up the Anti-option Bill as the "unfinished business," and unless it can be passed at once or be sent temporarily out of the way by parliamentary tactics the hard fight against it will result in blocking much other legislation. The lobby which is agitating this bill is a powerful one, and it claims to be certain of defeating the bill, because of a change in sentiment concerning the bill in the South and its consequent effect upon Senators from that section; but those who favor the bill say that it cannot be beaten on a vote and that the only hope of its opponents is to kill it by prolonging the debate against it until the end of the session. It is understood that Vice-President Morton's sympathies are with the opponents of the bill. If that be correct he can aid in many ways in prolonging the discussion to the end of the session.

President Harrison's message to Congress differs in several respects from any of his previous messages. In the first place it is not so well written, a fact fully accounted for by the recent sad happenings at the White House; the only wonder is that he could have written it at all. It presents in a compact form the work of the present Administration, of course from a strong protection Republican point of view, and reiterates Mr. Harrison's belief in the principles upon which his party has just sustained a national defeat, and intimates his belief that those principles will again triumph in the near future. With the exception of that in favor of the establishment of a national quarantine, the message contains no recommendation of importance.

I have it from trustworthy authority that Surgeon General Wyman of the Marine Hospital Service will in his annual report, shortly to be made public, make a strong plea for the suspension of all immigration for the year 1893, as a protection to keep the cholera out of the United States. The sentiment in favor of a suspension of immigration is growing very rapidly in Congress, and unless something shall occur to change it some legislation looking to that end will almost surely go through at this session.

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